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PROPOSED TARIFF LEGISLATION SINCE 1883.

During the last two congresses, several attempts have been made to secure modification and reduction of the customs duties as they were left by the act of 1883. A recapitulation of the propositions made and of the action thereon is interesting and suggestive, in view of the present condition of the tariff question and its present political relations.

The first session of the Forty-eighth Congress lasted from Monday, December 3, 1883, to Monday, July 7, 1884. The Democrats were in a decided majority in the House, having 198 members, against 126 Republicans and Independents.* The contest over the speakership was sharp, and resulted in the choice of Mr. Carlisle, of Kentucky, who represented the tariff-reduction wing of the Democrats, his principal opponent being Mr. Randall, a Pennsylvania Democrat. Mr. Morrison, of Illinois, was appointed chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means.

On the 4th of February, 1884, Mr. Morrison introduced a tariff bill† in the House of Representatives. It proposed an average reduction of 20 per cent., but with so many exceptions that it was estimated the average reduction on dutiable articles would be about 17 per cent. The rates under the Morrill Act of 1861 were to form the minimum limit. An extensive addition to the free list was proposed, including the following articles: ores of iron, copper, lead, and nickel, coal, lumber, wood, hay, bristles, lime, sponges, indigo, coal tar, and dyewoods. The bill was to take effect July 1, 1884.

Having been read twice, this bill—the “Morrison horizontal,” as it was called—was referred to the Committee of Ways and Means, where it was thoroughly discussed and somewhat changed, all the articles being removed from the free list except salt, coal, lumber, and wood. The reductions in the revenue proposed by the bill as reported to the House, Tuesday, March 11, amounted to \$30,000,000. The majority

* These figures were changed later to 201 and 123 respectively by the unseating of 3 Republicans. There was one vacancy.

† H. R. 4416.

of the committee reporting the bill was strictly Democratic, the two Republican members reporting adversely.

On Friday, March 21, a conference of "free trade" Democratic leaders was held, at which it was decided to call a general party caucus on the following Tuesday, to decide what action should be taken on the bill. At this caucus, which was attended by all but 10 Democratic Representatives, it was voted, 114 to 57: first, that the bill should be considered; second, that it should be passed, if possible; and, third, that the vote of the caucus should not be binding upon an individual member "except so far as he might be influenced by the expressed opinion of a majority of his associates." The result of the caucus was unsatisfactory to the "tariff reformers," as revealing strong opposition to the bill within the party.

On Tuesday, April 15, the motion to go into Committee of the Whole, for the consideration of the tariff bill, was carried without division. Upon the assembling of the committee, Mr. Eaton, a Connecticut Democrat, objected to the consideration of the bill; but the motion to proceed was carried by a vote of 140 to 138, 6 Republicans voting in the affirmative and 49 Democrats in the negative.*

On the following dates, April 15, 16, 22, 23, 24, 28, 29, 30, May 1, 2, 5, and 6, the bill was debated by the House in Committee of the Whole. The principal speeches were made by Messrs. Morrison, Hurd, Hewitt, Blackburn, Belmont, Mills, Blount, Vance, and Clay in favor, and Messrs. Kelley, Randall, Russell, McKinley, Hiscock, Dingley, Eaton, Findlay, and Kasson in opposition. The debate being closed Tuesday, May 6, the Committee, on motion of Mr. Converse, an Ohio Democrat, voted, 156 to 151, to strike out the enacting clause. Immediately after, the House concurred in this action by a vote of 159 to 155, 10 not voting. The majority included 118 Republicans† and 41 Democrats; the minority, 4 Republicans and 151 Democrats. Of the 41 Democrats who voted to kill the bill, 12 were from Pennsylvania, 10 from Ohio, 6 from New York, 4 from California, 3 from New Jersey,

*This is the latest vote in the House favorable to the consideration of a general tariff bill.

† Independents included.

and 1 from Illinois, Connecticut, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, and Louisiana respectively. The 4 Republicans* voting for the bill were all from Minnesota.

The "Morrison horizontal bill" having been thus killed, Mr. Hewitt, a New York Democrat and a member of the Ways and Means Committee, on May 12 introduced a new tariff bill, † providing for a reduction of 10 to 20 per cent. on a considerable number of articles and placing several others on the free list. This bill was much less objectionable from the point of view of the protectionist than the Morrison bill, and, moreover, was intended to meet the charge brought against the latter of not discriminating. The Hewitt bill was referred to the Committee of Ways and Means, which, by a strict party vote, reported it favorably to the House, June 24. The adjournment of Congress shortly after, on July 7, prevented further consideration of the bill.

At the same session of Congress, three attempts at special tariff legislation are worthy of notice: (1) the Converse ‡ wool bill, to restore the duties of 1867 on raw wool, which was defeated Monday, April 7, by a vote of 126 to 119, 80 Republicans and 39 Democrats voting in favor of the restoration and 12 Republicans and 114 Democrats against it; (2) the amendment by Mr. Cox § to the shipping bill, for the free importation of iron and steel steamships to be employed in the foreign trade, which passed the House, but was defeated in the Senate; (3) Mr. Hurd's ¶ bill, reducing the duty on works of art from 20 to 10 per cent., which was defeated by a vote of 179 to 52, most of the Southern and Western "free traders" voting against the bill because it was not of a general nature and applied to luxuries.

During the short session of the Forty-eighth Congress, which lasted from December 1, 1884, to March 4, 1885, one matter is deserving of notice; namely, the introduction of a bill in the Senate, January 5, 1885, by Senator Beck ¶ of Kentucky, providing for the appointment of a general Revenue Commission, consisting of Senators, Representatives, and the

* Messrs. Nelson, Strait, Wakefield, and White.

† H. R. 6970.

‡ Ohio Democrat.

§ New York Democrat.

¶ Ohio Democrat.

¶ Democrat.

Secretary of the Treasury, for the purpose of finding out what changes in the tariff were desirable. The bill was referred to the Finance Committee, where it appears to have ended its career.

In the Forty-ninth Congress, which met for its first session Monday, December 7, 1885, the House consisted of 184 Democrats and 140 Republicans, the Democratic majority of the preceding Congress having decreased nearly one-half.* Mr. Carlisle was again elected Speaker, and Mr. Morrison was re-appointed at the head of the Ways and Means Committee. President Cleveland, in his message to Congress, called attention forcibly to the surplus revenue and the desirability of reducing the taxes on the necessities of life. Secretary Manning also, in his report, urged a radical revision of the tariff, advising a removal of the duties on many raw materials, and calling special attention to such duties as had been levied originally to offset internal taxes which have been removed since.

On Monday, February 15, 1886, Mr. Morrison introduced a bill,† which was read and referred to the Committee on Ways and Means. It was expected to reduce the revenue by about \$20,000,000,—one-half of this on sugar, one-fourth on articles placed on the free list, and the other fourth on articles reduced. The proposed free list included hemp, jute, coal, salt, iron, lead, and copper ores, corn, chiccory, oats, hay, potatoes, wood, and lumber. It was proposed to make a reduction on coarse cottons from 40 to 35 per cent. *ad valorem*, on pig iron from \$6.72 to \$5.60 per ton, on steel rails from \$17 to \$12.50 per ton, on window glass about 20 per cent. The bill was less extreme than the "Horizontal bill" of 1884. The average reduction proposed, moreover, was considerably less than the 20 to 25 per cent. recommended by the Tariff Commission of 1882. The main object of the bill appeared to be the relief of the manufacturing industries. Its author declared that he intended in the bill to give the Democrats an opportunity to stand by the tariff plank in their platform of 1884.

On Tuesday, March 23, the Committee of Ways and Means voted to allow hearings on the effect of the bill till March 12.

* There was one vacancy.

† H. R. 5576.

The supporters of the measure held that this was unnecessary, as sufficient testimony had already been taken in the hearings before the Tariff Commission and in the discussion over the "Horizontal bill." During the discussion in the committee, it was found desirable to make radical changes in the bill as introduced by Mr. Morrison, inasmuch as it was clearly seen that the opposition from the metal and coal interests was sufficiently strong to destroy all chance of consideration in the House. Accordingly, it was found preferable to make the duties on wool and woollens the special point for assault. In accordance with this change of base, Mr. Morrison, supported by seven of his associates,—namely, Messrs. Mills, Hewitt, McMillin, Harris, C. R. Breckinridge, Maybury, and W. C. P. Breckinridge,—and opposed by five,—namely, Messrs. Kelley, Hiscock, Brown, Reed, and McKinley,—on April 12 reported a substitute bill,* which, by vote of the House, was referred to the Committee of the Whole.

In the new Morrison bill, the free list included only lumber, wood, fish, salt, flax, hemp, jute, and wool. The tax on sugar was reduced but 10 per cent.; the duties on woollens were lowered to 35 per cent. *ad valorem*.† It was estimated that the bill would cut down the revenue about \$25,000,000, distributed as follows:—

Free list (lumber, salt, wool, etc.),	\$7,097,000
Cottons (reduced),	369,000
Hemp, flax, and jute (reduced),	931,000
Woollens (reduced),	11,565,000
Sugar (reduced),	5,088,000
Total,	<u>\$25,050,000</u>

The supporters of the bill held that the proposed reduction in the revenue was moderate, inasmuch as the net surplus for 1885 had been \$30,000,000.

Nothing was done with this bill until Thursday, June 17, when Mr. Morrison moved that the House go into Committee of the Whole for the consideration of revenue bills. The ayes and nays were called; and the motion was defeated, 140 to 157, 27 not voting. The minority was composed of 4 Republicans

* H. R. 7652.

† For other reductions proposed, cf. Table V.

and 136 Democrats, and the majority of 122 Republicans and 35 Democrats. Of the 4 Republicans voting to consider, 3* were from Minnesota and 1† from New York. Of the 35 Democrats who voted against consideration, 10 were from New York, 8 from Ohio, 5 from Pennsylvania, 4 from Louisiana, 3 from New Jersey, 2 from Illinois, and 1 from Maryland, Alabama, and California respectively. No further attempt to take up the bill was made in the first session of the Forty-ninth Congress, which closed Wednesday, August 4, 1886.

In the second session, Mr. Morrison, on Saturday, December 18, 1886, again moved the consideration of revenue bills, and was again defeated,—149 to 154, 19 not voting. Of the members failing to vote, 10 are known to have favored consideration and 8 to have been opposed to it, so that, including these, the majority amounted to 3. An analysis of the vote shows that the minority consisted of 6 Republicans (2‡ from Massachusetts and 4§ from Minnesota) and 143 Democrats, and the majority of 128 Republicans and 26 Democrats.¶ Of those Democrats who opposed consideration, 7 were from Ohio, 5 from New York, 5 from Pennsylvania, 4 from Louisiana, 2 from New Jersey, 2 from Illinois, and 1 from Alabama.

The other attempts at general tariff legislation in the Forty-ninth Congress were the Hewitt, Randall, and Hiscock bills. The first of these, which was introduced in the House February 1, 1886, and referred to the Committee of Ways and Means, pertained especially to administrative reforms.¶ Its principal features were embodied in the Morrison bill as finally reported by the committee.

The Randall bill,** introduced June 28, 1886, and referred to the Ways and Means Committee, was intended to present the protectionist method of reducing the revenue. It proposed the removal of all internal taxes on tobacco, cigars, snuff, fruit, brandies, and spirits for use in the arts, and the reduction of some customs duties. It placed lumber, jute butts, and bristles on the free list, and slightly lowered the

* Messrs. Nelson, Strait, and Wakefield.

† Mr. James.

‡ Messrs. Stone and Hayden.

§ Messrs. Nelson, Strait, Wakefield, and White.

¶ For vote in detail, cf. Tables I. to IV.

¶ H. R. 5010.

** H. R. 9702.

duties on iron, steel, boards, lead, zinc, bagging, and salt. Mr. Randall estimated that the bill would cause a decrease of \$34,000,000 in the revenue receipts, of which over \$8,000,000 would be tariff reduction. The committee reported the bill adversely July 10, declaring that it would cause no decrease in the customs duties, but an increase of \$5,500,000. Mr. Randall afterwards proposed a substitute for this bill, adding to the free list such articles as beeswax, nuts, and potash.

The Hiscock bill* is of special interest as being most in line with the kind of tariff legislation that we may expect to see favored by the friends of protection for adoption in the Fiftieth Congress. It provided for the removal of the internal taxes on tobacco and methylated spirits, and for a heavy reduction of the duty on sugar, at the same time proposing the payment of a bounty to the American producer of this article. This bill, introduced in the House January 8, 1887, by the present Senator from New York, was referred to the Ways and Means Committee, in which body it was killed.

No special tariff bill of the last session of the Forty-ninth Congress deserves notice, except, possibly, the Dunn Free Ship bill, which was reported favorably to the House by the Committee on Shipping, 7 to 6. The majority consisted of 7 Democrats, and the minority of 5 Republicans and 1 Democrat. The bill was lost in the House.

Between the two votes in the Forty-ninth Congress on the question of considering the Morrison bill, a general election was held, in which the tariff was an important issue. Both the protectionists and the free traders asserted that the advantage was theirs, but an impartial analysis of the figures seems to point to a division of gains and losses. If we compare the vote in December with that in the preceding June, we find that those favoring tariff reduction gained 2 in the Middle Atlantic States, 2 in the New England, and 8 in the Western, and lost 3 in the Southern; while their opponents lost 2 in the New England States, 3 in the Middle Atlantic, and 1 in the Pacific, and gained two in the Southern. In the Pacific States, those favoring a reduction had no votes in either June or December.†

O. H. PERRY.

*H. R. 10415.

† Cf. Tables I. to IV. for other suggestive comparisons.

TABLE I.

VOTE BY PARTIES ON THE MORRISON BILLS OF 1884 AND 1886.

	1884.				June, 1886.				December, 1886.			
	Yes	No.	Not Voting.	Totals.	Yes	No.	Not Voting.	Totals.	Yes	No.	Not Voting.	Totals.
Rep- ubli- cans,	4	118	4	126	4	122	13	139	6	128	6	140
Demo- crats.	151	41	6	198	136	35	14	185	143	26	13	182
Totals,	155	159	10	324	140	157	27	324	149	154	19	322

In each case, "yes" means in favor of reduction of duties, and "no" means opposed to it.

TABLE II.

REPUBLICAN VOTES FOR REDUCTION OF DUTIES.

State.	1884.	June, 1886.	December, 1886.
Massachusetts . .	None.	None.	2
New York	"	1	None.
Minnesota	4	3	4
Totals,	4	4	6

TABLE III.

DEMOCRATIC VOTES AGAINST REDUCTION OF DUTIES (1) BY STATES AND (2) BY SECTIONS.

(1)

States.	1884.	June, 1886.	December, 1886.
Connecticut,	1	None.	None.
New York,	6	10	5
New Jersey,	3	3	2
Pennsylvania,	12	5	5
Maryland,	1	1	None.
West Virginia,	1	None.	"
Virginia,	1	"	"
Alabama,	None.	1	1
Louisiana,	1	4	4
Ohio,	10	8	7
Illinois,	1	2	2
California,	4	1	None.
Totals,	41	35	26

(2)

Sections.	1884.	June, 1886.	December, 1886.
New England,	1	None.	None.
Middle Atlantic,	23	19	12
Southern,	2	5	5
Western,	11	10	9
Pacific,	4	1	0
Totals,	41	35	26

TABLE IV.

ENTIRE VOTE BOTH BY STATES AND BY SECTIONS IN THE HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES, IN 1884, JUNE, 1886,
AND DECEMBER, 1886.

1884.

June, 1886.

December, 1886.

States.	No. of Rep's.	Yes.	No.	Not Voting.	Yes.	No.	Not Voting.	Yes.	No.	Not Voting.
Maine, . . .	4	None.	4	None.	None.	4	None.	None.	4	None.
New Hampshire,	2	"	2	"	"	1	1	"	1	1
Vermont, . .	2	"	2	"	"	2	None.	"	2	None.
Massachusetts,	12	3	9	"	1	10	1	4	7	1
Connecticut, .	4	2	2	"	2	2	None.	1	2	1
Rhode Island, .	2	None.	2	"	None.	1	1	None.	2	None.
New England,	26	5	21	"	3	20	3	5	18	3
New York, . .	34	14	19	1	7	26	1	10	22	None.
New Jersey, .	7	None.	7	None.	None.	7	None.	None.	6	1
Pennsylvania,	28	"	27	1	3	22	3	1	25	2
Delaware, . .	1	1	None.	None.	1	0	None.	1	None.	None.
Maryland, . .	6	3	3	"	4	2	"	5	1	"
West Virginia,	4	2	2	"	3	1	"	3	1	"
Middle Atlantic,	80	20	58	2	18	58	4	20	55	3
Virginia, . .	10	5	5	None.	8	2	None.	7	2	1
North Carolina,	9	6	2	1	6	1	2	7	1	1
South Carolina,	7	6	1	None.	5	1	1	5	1	1
Georgia, . . .	10	9	None.	1	10	None.	None.	9	None.	1
Alabama, . .	8	8	"	None.	6	1	1	6	1	1
Florida, . . .	2	1	1	"	2	None.	None.	2	None.	None.
Mississippi, .	7	4	1	1	7	"	"	7	"	"
Louisiana, .	6	4	2	None.	2	4	"	1	4	1
Texas, . . .	11	10	None.	1	11	None.	"	10	None.	1
Arkansas, . .	5	5	"	None.	5	"	"	5	"	None.
Kentucky, . .	11	9	1	1	10	1	"	10	1	"
Tennessee, . .	10	8	2	None.	7	1	2	7	3	"
Southern, . .	96	75	15	5	79	11	6	76	13	7
Ohio,	21	3	18	None.	3	18	None.	3	16	2
Indiana, . . .	13	8	4	1	9	4	"	9	3	1
Illinois, . . .	20	7	12	1	7	11	2	8	12	None.
Michigan, . .	11	6	5	None.	6	4	1	7	4	"
Wisconsin, . .	9	6	3	"	1	3	4	2	6	"
Minnesota, . .	5	4	1	"	3	1	1	4	1	"
Iowa,	11	4	7	"	1	7	3	4	7	"
Missouri, . .	14	14	None.	"	10	2	2	11	1	2
Kansas, . . .	7	None.	7	"	None.	6	1	None.	7	None.
Nebraska, . .	3	"	2	1	"	3	None.	"	3	"
Colorado, . .	1	"	1	None.	"	1	"	"	1	"
Western, . .	115	52	60	3	40	60	14	48	61	5
California, . .	6	2	4	None.	None.	6	None.	None.	5	1
Oregon, . . .	1	None.	1	"	"	1	"	"	1	None.
Nevada, . . .	1	1	None.	"	"	1	"	"	1	"
Pacific, . . .	8	3	5	"	"	8	"	"	7	1
Totals, . .	325	155	159	10	140	157	27	149	154	19

TABLE V.

CERTAIN CHANGES PROPOSED BY THE MORRISON AND RANDALL
BILLS OF 1886, TOGETHER WITH PRESENT RATES.

Articles.	Present Rates.	Morrison Bill, 1886.*	Randall Bill, 1886.†
Cottons, coarse	2½c. per yard.	2c. per yd.	2½c. per yd.
“ fine	6c. “ “	5c. “ “	6c. “ “
Cotton Thread	7c. “ dozen.	6c. “ dozen.	7c. “ dozen.
Flax	\$20 to \$40 per ton.	Free.	\$20 to \$40 per ton.
Hemp	“ “ “ “	“	\$25 per ton.
Jute	\$15 per ton.	“	Free.
Bagging	40%.	30%.	35%.
Cordage	2½ to 3½c. per lb.	1½ to 2½c. per lb.	2½c. per lb.
Oil-cloth	40%.	30%.	35%.
Wool	10c. per lb.	Free.	10c. per lb.‡
Woollen Cloth	{ 35c. per yd. + 35 to 40%.	35%.	{ 30 to 35c. per yd. + 35 to 40%.
Flannels	{ 10 to 24c. per yd. + 35%.	“	{ 10 to 24c. per yd. + 35%.
Carpets	{ 25 to 45c. per yd. + 30%.	“	{ 25 to 45c. per yd. + 30%.
Sugar	1½ to 3½c. per lb.	10% reduction.	1½ to 3½c. per lb.
Salt, in bulk	8c. per cwt.	Free.	4c. per cwt.
Salt, in packages	12c. “ “	“	10c. “ “
Fish	1c. per lb.	“	½ to 1c. per lb.
Lumber	20%.	“	Free.

* As reported from Ways and Means Committee.

† Mr. Randall's substitute for H. R. 9702.

‡ Duty in reality increased, owing to the provision in regard to dirt in the wool.

TABLE VI.

FREE LISTS.

Morrison Bill, 1884.*	Morrison Bill, 1886.*	Randall Bill, 1886.†
Lumber	Lumber	Lumber
Salt	Salt	Salt
Coal	Jute	Jute
	Wool	
	Fish	
	Hemp	
	Flax	
		Bristles
		Beeswax
		Potash

* As reported from Ways and Means Committee.

† Substitute for H. R. 9702.